



MEDITATIONS

*Divine
& Morall*

By H. T. M.

M. A. and sometimes
of St John's Colledge,
Cambridge.

*Give care to my words,
O Lord, consider my
Meditations. Ps. 138.*

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MEDITATIONS.



Good Preacher should be a good Orator. Pure language and Sound doc-

trine may well stand together. Bad Rhetorick will marre the Text, which a gentle paraphrase can make both plain and pleasant. Oratory though it doe not constitute a Divine in his
B Essence,

Essence, yet it makes him pow-
 erful in his speech. The word
 of God is not the words of men,
 principles prove more effectual by
 a gracious utterance. Divinity
 is the Queen and the Mistresse
 of all other Sciences; and 'tis
 fit that such a Sovereigne
 should be dress'd in stately
 Robes. The Minister is the
 Ambassador of Heaven, and
 shall he present his message in
 a scurvy Style? his expressions
 may be clear and yet Eloquent.
 A sentence well cloathed does
 not perplex, but help the un-
 derstanding, and quicken the
 memory. What reasonable
 Hearer can sleep at a Sermon
 composed by a wakeful braine?
 An Elaborate phrase should
 make our ears glom and stirre
 up

Meditations.

up our attention to a diligent admiration. An affectation of Eloquence in the pulpit is unhandsome; but *fit* allusions and *significant* terms are both *comely*, *useful*, and *necessary*.

II.

There is much difference betwixt *knowledge* and *true wisdom*. *Learning* sometimes makes men very *fooles*. 'Tis true indeed, that the *Arts and Sciences* are the *riches* of the soul, but without a discreet use no better then a treasure either *prodigally* spent, or *superstitiously* kept under lock and key. Some have grown more wise by *experience* than others by their deep *study* and *revolution*

Meditations.

lution of *Authors*. They that want most do not always catch most; and oftentimes a *natural* wit far excels the greatest *industry*. Labour does but rack the brains, and often overturn it. The most learned are so far from a solid understanding, that many times they fall into madness the extremity of folly. Mens *writings* for the most part are full of formality, but their *actions* speak the proper sense of their mindes. *Books* commonly are nothing but *phrase*, and *style*, and *fancy*; but the soakest instructions proceed from *Example*. He that hath no other way to discover himself but by the *Pen*, will prove an object of more scorn then admiration. *Much reading* is a great hin-

hindrance to good breeding;
and hence it is that the best
Schollars are such perfect
clowns. The truth is, the deep-
est apprehension, the quickest
judgement may be very igno-
rant in the matter of our con-
versation both towards God
and towards man. Learning
of it Selfe is neither grace nor
manners, though it may be an
Ornament to both.

III.

When I behold some rare
picture or any other curious
piece, my judgement present-
ly informs me that some curi-
ous Artist had a hand in it.
Every stately building directs
us to the consideration of him
that built it. And shall not

the contemplation of the world and the knowledge of so many excellent things therein contained, constrain us to acknowledge a Supream power that over-rules all? The *Ship* cannot saile in a direct course without a *Pilot*: the *City* cannot be well governed without a *Magistrate*: and can any man conceive that those lights of heaven, the *Stars* could continue their equal courses without his providence that made them? or that the *earth* could remain so well ordered by *Natures* Law, if there were not some over-ruling Lord to command and direct? He is but dimly sighted that cannot behold the omnipotence of God, the goodness, the favour, and love of God

God to man in this outward frame and fabrick of created powers; Yet the Sunne will shine though men be blinde; and the invisible Deity is still Himself, though the Atheist will not believe it.

IV.

Friendship if once broken is hardly made up again. Those things which are of a most pure composition if once dissolved are never united. Pieces of chrystal cannot be soldered: so hard it is to reconcile them, who from close familiarity are divided into mutual hatred. Where is there greater enmity then betwixt Brethren? whom Nature hath linked together, the Devil

can divorce into everlasting discord. The Reason of this (I conceive) is, because the *best* things corrupted become *worse*: and when vertue it self shall degenerate into *sin*, who can hope for any reparation or recovery to goodness?

V.

Too much desire of learning leads a man into a discontented ignorance. Curiosity is the *bain* of our soules, the *nurse* of infidelity. He that would *know* more then he *can*, will not *believe* so much as he *ought*. He that thrusts himself into *unnecessary* speculations, will first *neglect*, and at last *forget* a *necessary* truth. He that strives for more then he can

can well apprehend, may lose what he hath already obtained. A *modest* search into the secrets of nature is both *easy*, *pleasant*, and *profitable*; but to dive into the depths of an *impossible* Art will but *puzzle* and *distract* the brain. An *inquisitive* soul may go *farre*, and finde out *much*; but still he shall see more ground before him then he hath left behind. Some men that would seeme to understand *all* things, are most *ignorant*. A *curious* inquiry puts them into a vaine conceit of their own strength and parts, the onely *traytor* to the understanding. The beames and light of the Sunne refresh the sight; but if we fix our eye upon it, the object offends, and but dazels.

Ecl. I. 14

the beholder. He that knew most, knew that the upshot of all was but *Vanity and vexation of Spirit.*

VI.

We are naturally more sensible of *Affliction* then of *comfort.* *Haman* is more troubled with one crosse from *Mordecai*, then satisfied with all the reverence of his Adorers; which yet proceeds from an over-valuation of our content: whence it is that we are so affected in the losse or least interruption of our happinesse; presently struck dead if our expectation be deceiv'd. *David* cries out for his sonne *Absolon*, as if the whole frame of nature had been

a Sam. 18

33

been involved in his destruction, when for his own sake he had more reason to be transported with passions of joy. Here was not only an excess, but a *misprision* of love; a *mistake* of natural affection. He was so swallowed up with the sense of his *supposed* misery, that he knew not how to value a *good turn*. The Object of his *fond* delight did suppress the clearness of his judgement, that he could not distinguish betwixt a *benefit* and an *injury*. So apt are we to repine at our crosses from too much indulgence to our delights, that commonly we take one for the other.

And how the latter
in a constant change

VII.

Idleness is the barrennesse of the soul. All living creatures have by nature some kinde of employment, the benefit of which is communicated to the rest of the world. The worst things have some goodnesse, and are still busied in some active engagement for a generall use and profit. *Plants* and *herbs* which have no *visible* motion advance themselves by degrees into a fruitful state and condition. The creature without *life*, is not without *action*. With what a brave carere the shining *Sunne* spreads his diurnal pace? And how the sister *Moon* in a constant change fol-

follow this leading dance? How *nimble* is the *fire*, how *piercing* is the *air*? How the *Sea* rowles about with perpetual waves? All which may teach man a lesson of laborious diligence, and raise him from the lethargy of a non-employment. *Lazineſſ* corrupts both the *body* and the *minde*. Nothing can be so tedious and irksome as to want business. *Exercise* keeps the heart in tune, and feeds the spirits with a lively sense, whereas doing *nothing* disorders the brain, and starves the quickest wits into a dull discontent.

VIII.

Baldneſſ is an Ornament to a vertuous man: but when 'tis

'tis put on to bolster up a vicious act, nothing more odious. Bashful vertue 'tis a foolish sin, and bold vice is a sinful bravery. Too much modesty intangles the soule with many impediments; and over-daring drives headlong into infinite dangers. Remorse for sinning is a divine grace, but to be ashamed of goodnesse is the next way that leads to impiety. How many good natures have betray'd themselves for want of courage to deny an unreasonable importunity? As I would not stubbornly reject the worst request, so I shall never grant the best without some intimation of power in the libertie of a denial. I will neither accept nor afford anything in such a manner, but

but that the world shall see,
I could easily *forbear* to confer,
and as easily *refuse* a benefit.

IX.

If a man were nothing but
all *care*, yet a *boundlesse* tongue
would tire his patience. And
commonly those that are *tedi-*
ous in their discourse, are also
impertinent. He that regards
his *matter*, will not strive for
words. He that loves to hear
himself talk, considers not
what will please *others*. How
was poore *Horace* tortured
with the shuffling shifting
voice of *Crispinus*! Like the
scraping of a trencher, or the
noise of a drum to a learned
Student, such are the ill sounds
of a *talkative* mouth to a judi-
cious

Mat. 12. 36

ciom hearer. The *teeth* and *lips* seeme to be drawn out as a *circle* to keep in the *slippery speech*; which must needs run some hazard when it runs too far without these lines of communication. But if a *present* danger cannot fright the secure speaker, I wish those that love to speak much would consider *that one day they must give an account for every idle word.*

X.

It is an easie task to *censure* another. Hardly any thing can be undertaken without some *mistakes*. No man can express himself so exactly, but a *censorious* critick will finde matter enough to work upon. We may easily spy a *fault* where

where there are many *vertues*. It is not always a part of *wisdom* to discover a *folly*. *Ignorance* is a busie fool that would seem wise by condemning others, when it knows least it self. He that is alwayes raking in ashes will but foule his own face; and he that seeks to diminish the credit of his *neighbour*, may cast a blemish upon his own *reputation*.

X I.

There are certain *birds* of *Paradise* which make the best *musick* in a *Cage*. The sweet singer of *Israel* was most full of melody in his greatest *Afflictions*. *David* could blesse God in a *cave*, *Job* on the *dunghill*. The *prison* sometimes
is

is the Saints Quire, where the heart is at liberty; while the body is under restraint, and their very groans are acceptable notes of praise and benediction.

The good mans sorrow is never without some joy. Our very hope can afford us songs of deliverance. When our heavenly father makes up the consort, who can forbear to tune his voice and keep time with him? Heaven and happiness waits upon them that with patience attend his pleasure. Gods presence translates the Dungeon into a Sanctuary, turns Babylon to Hierusalem, captivity into triumph. Our Jaylors are our life-guard, our enemies our servants, since they serve but as instruments

ments to his will upon us, who is indeed our Master. He is happy enough that can patiently expect salvation. As the Marriner keepes under hatches till the tempest be allayed, so our present misery is nothing but a safe retiring till all dangerous stormes be blown over, and we arrive at last to the Haven of our Rest.

on living great happiness
iniquitous XII. on sinners
by sinners of the law to

In experience I shall observe this Rule; rather spend too little then too much. For covetousness there may be some satisfaction, but the Prodigal is lost beyond all Redemption. He that spends above his abilities will never be able to make himselfe amends

mends. I had rather deceive the expectations of others, then cosen my self. He that straines his estate to be accounted liberal, may be thought covetous when all's spent: for the world is most apt to censure those that decline their former course. Give God his due in Tythes, the poor in Almes, and thy self in Necessaries, and there will remaine no grear superfluitie of wealth to cast away in vanity.

XIII.

Our joys in this world do not alwayes run smooth and clear. The best Contentments have some kinde of muddy mixture; the sweetest cup hath some Lees at the bottom. Our

outward peace is frequently interrupted; our inward peace is oftentimes eclipsed. Here is no constant satisfaction in this Region of vicissitude. Our comforts are neither full nor permanent. We must look for that happinesse in heaven. Who would live in this vale of brittle earth where every thing consumes, and nothing is everlasting? In the highest advancement some clouds will overshadow us. In the height of joy, there may be a depth of sorrow. There is a kinde of connexion in contrarieties. Here prosperity and adversity are linked together. It is said of *Hezekiah* after his glorious victory over the host of *Zenacherib*, that in those dayes *Hezekiah* was sick to the death.

Isa. 38. 7.

death. *Those dayes are these dayes, and all dayes in our sphere, where the greatest blessings are perpetually attended with some discontents, and such sometimes that sickness or death would be a blessed remedy.*

XIV.

Nothing makes the work of God in the compositions of our bodies more admirable than the *beauty* of their *shape* and curious *Art* used in the workmanship. For this cause the *Royal Prophet* considering his *Creation* cries out as one ravished with admiration, *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. No image or picture can be*
com-

compared with the form of a mans body : no imbroydered piece can be so well wrought, or set out with such variety of excellent figures. But when we consider that besides, there is a *soul* inclosed in this exquisite *frame*, as farre above it as that above all other things, we cannot be so unthankful or unreasonable as not to acknowledge that the divine hand of heaven hath a *peculiar* influence of benediction and favour to the race of *man-kinde*, beyond all other *Creatures* whatsoever.

XV.

In every work, we are to regard as well the *manner* of performing it, as the *work* it self. It is not enough to say
our

1 Sam. 6.

Math. 10.
41

our prayers, to go to Church, to hear a Sermon, to receive the Sacrament, to give alms; but all this must be performed with hearty devotion. Though the Ark be brought to his place of Rest, yet God is not well pleased to have it drawn with Oxen in a Cart. The widows two mites were more acceptable then all the others wealth: she gave all she had with all her heart, whereas they perhaps out of pride, or ostentation, cast in their superfluities into the common treasure: A cup of cold water freely given shall not want a reward. Our best services are nothing worth if not seasoned with truth and discretion. Therefore God once made a breach upon his people,

be-

because they sought him not after the *due order*. Our *duties* are *undutiful* if not *duly* marshalled and *fitly* ranked. *Service* without a *method* is worse then *ill manners*. No action can be *well done* without a good meaning; none *well meant* without a comely and decent behaviour. Every circumstance must bear the sense of sound wisdom and cleare justice.

XVI.

Beauty is a grace that proceeds from the *proportion*, *agreement*, and *harmony* of things; it is then most seemly in the body of man when it follows *nature* alone without any *blemish* or *defect*. How far we may use the help of

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Art,

Art, and disguise a deformity to appeare more comely then we are by our Creation, a sober Christian may easily resolve. As God is not pleased if we *mangle* and *macerate* our bodies with cruel tortures, so he cannot but be offended when we *over-garnish* them with gaudy colours, and lay on the varnish of a deep complexion. It is to be feared that they can hardly *speake* from their *heart*, that cannot *blush* from their *own* blood. When the *face* can dissemble so well, the *tongue* may be suspected too. A painted feature is the emblem of *Vice*, which would seem to be adorned with the blushing colours of *vertue*, when she intends nothing but temptation. We
are

are not to *disfigure* our faces when we fast in our greatest *sorrow*; nor *reform* them too much when we *feast* in our highest *mirth*; we must not *mar* Gods work; we must not *mend* it so as if it should need no additions of glory hereafter.

XVII.

Wicked men judge of other mens afflictions by their own. The *Amalekite* was very well pleased with the death of *Saul*; and therefore thought the news would be welcome to *David*, for which, instead of a *reward*, he lost his *life*. It sounds very ill in *David*s ear that his enemy was destroyed; though he stood betwixt him and a

2 Sam. I.

Crown. He desires not to *rise* in his Throne by the fall of another. He finds no matter of joy in a Kingdome got by blood. Thus different are the thoughts of a good soul from the vaine conceits and imaginations of a worldly minde. Therefore they deceive themselves that measure the disposition of others by their own standard. The *giddy drunkard* thinks the world runs round as well as his braines. The *vitious* man accounts *vertue* an impossibility, and will not be perswaded that there is any such thing indeed as *conscience* or *Religion*, till at last woful experience constraine him to confess the truth with too late Repentance.

XVIII.

The *prosperity* of wicked men may breed in weak mindes some doubt of Gods providence. They live as if they had a security for everlasting happiness. Whereas *vertue* lies unregarded, and contemned, assaulted with continual stormes of misery. The *bold* sinner never misses of preferment, but *modest* innocence may starve without compassion: How seldome do we see any preferred for his deserving qualities? *Villany* is so much in fashion, that 'tis *absurd* to be *vertuous*. 'Tis true, *Vice* is the gallant of this world, and the only favourite of fortune; but our observa-

tion may yet inform us, that *shame* is the consequent of *sin*. There are few exorbitant crimes but have their attended torments, though not alwayes apprehended. Both *punishments* and *blessings* have their *season* of maturity. The Judgements of God never *faile*, though they may be *protracted*. Some corrections are in secret. All offences are not branded with a publick mark. If there were no other torment but the *guilt* it selfe, it were enough to expresse the *miserie* of a sinful life.

XIX.

The *soul* in respect of the *body* may be compared to an excellent Workman, who can-

cannot labour in his occupation without some necessary instruments, and those well wrought and prepared to his hand. The most skilful *Musician* cannot raise any harmony from an instrument of musick out of tune. We are therefore to be very careful of these external parts, since the spirit which moves in them can naturally produce no actions of worth, if this instrumental frame be out of order. Hence it is that those men who abuse their *bodies* by the violence of intemperate sinnes, are sometimes over-taken, either with a sleepy dulnesse, or a wilde distraction. Their *souls* are not able to produce any worthy Act after a defect contracted upon their

Organs, or else are unwilling to be restrained and confined to a bad lodging, or a loathsome dungeon. A good servant is a *credit* to his Master: a *fine* case is an Ornament to the *jewel*: a *sound* body is an honour to his *immortal* mistress, and is most fit to be a partner with her in everlasting glory. Whereas we may justly fear that they who bury themselves alive in rottenness, shall inherit nothing but that which is worse then corruption, a generation of perpetual torments.

XX.

It is strange to see what alterations *time* will make. Those works which were built to perpetuate the memory

ry of our Ancestors, are now laid level with the dust, how miserable were man if all his happiness consisted in the remnant of a glorious *Name*! and yet this was all the immortality which some expected after death. The strongest Bulwarks of *Renown* cannot resist the breath of *all-devouring age*: *Change* and *decay* are the elements of every state and condition. The most ancient *monuments* and *bones* of the dead have been defaced with sacrilegious hands. There is so little certainty in what we enjoy, that we cannot hope to bequeath an infallible substance to our posterity. We may sometimes observe more changes in a few years, then in all

probability of expectation many ages could produce. The world is like a Lottery where a man may be made or undone in a moment. The same person is *Cresus* to day and *Irrus* to morrow. There is no confidence or assurance in any worldly thing; we can neither recal what is past; command what is present, nor prevent what is to come.

XXI.

Amongst all those varieties of instruments made for the service and use of man, we cannot but admire the great nobility and worth of speech, with which he is endued above other creatures. By this we can convey our counsels

sels and thoughts to one another, without this there would be but little benefit of the *sense* and *understanding* which God hath bestowed upon us. *Beasts* have a confused noise, and by that in some measure can declare their meaning: but *men* only can dispense an articular sound. We have reason therefore to be careful how we deliver our selves, and utter our conceptions in such words as may tend to the *edification* of others, and the *glory* of our *Maker*.

XXII.

Asa was a very good son of very bad parents. Goodness proceeds from the favour
and

and grace of God, is not born with us, nor yet conveyed into our hearts by breeding and strict education. The *best instructions* are often rejected; and the *worst principles* cannot corrupt that heart which the holy Spirit is pleased to sanctifie. If men could entaile their *vertues* with their *estates*, what a world of glorious Saints would this world afford? On the other side, if *vice* were *hereditary*, what swarms of wickednesse would still increase? In all events whether of good or evill, let us alwayes admire the gracious providence of our heavenly Father.

XXIII.

He that hath but a meane fortune must be careful not to plant himself amongst his *Superiors*, for great men always suspect the endeavours of those that are *below* them; and fearing their own greatness may be supplanted in time, prevent such a suspected mischief with the ruine of their neighbours. *Power and Majesty can brook no equals.* A rich neighbour is compared to a Pyke, that devoures all the younger Fry. *Pharaohs fat-kine eat up the leane.* And the *Sea* swallows the *smaller Rivers*. The *poor* live best *with the poore*, as *Bees* thrives together in a *swarme*.
But

But the *sheep* are in continual fear when the *wolfe* is near.

XXIV.

Religion and *riches* seldom meet together. They that are kept down with such cloddes of earth can hardly reach at the joys of heaven. The *Rich-man* is so puff'd up with the leaven of his wealth, that he cannot enter in at the *strait-gate*, and the way thither is too narrow for his spreading greatnesse. Poore *Lazarus* was advanced to the *bosome of Abraham*, while *Devils* lay frying in the bowels of *Hell*. *Grace* and *abundance* are not alwayes inconsistent; but *Poverty* hath fewer temptations, and less danger. Nay
even

even in this world, plenty doth but crosse content; and he that hath all things to his minde, yet wants a mind to enjoy all he hath. Feare of loosing, care of preserving, envy of neighbours, opposition of enemies, so disturb his rest, that he cannot truly say, soul, take thy ease here, or soul, go to heaven hereafter.

XXV.

God and the world never agree in the measure of time. The purpose of his will, not the motion of the Sunne determines his houres. Did we set our wills by his decree, Gods clock and ours would alwayes strike together. Our affections are poised with the weights of

of self-love and ambition, which move too fast in regard of our true *necessity* which he only respects. The *least* delay seems tedious to an *hasty* minde, the *longest* is but short to the *patient* soul. Think not then that he is slow who never failes in the *houre* of his *promise*, though he answer not the very *minute* of our *expectation*.

XXVI.

Presumption is the harbinger of *destruction*. When men grow wanton in their sins, judgement is not farre from their elbows. *Agag* cries out most sweetly, the *bitterness* of death is past, when ready to be hewed in pieces. When his hopes were at the *highest*

1 Sam. 15.

32.

highest pitch, *Samuel* laid him even with the ground. The candle makes the greatest blaze in the socket, but presently expires with an unwholesome smell. The bold sinner is most confident at his latter end, but that confidence betrays him to the power of utter darknesse.

XXVII.

He that begins well gives a good hope of his future proceedings. Yet the first actions of men do not always entaile a perpetuity of grace. *Perseverance* is a rare and eminent vertue. *Foash* and *Nero* were two vertuous Princes under two excellent Tutors; but very bad Kings both, their

their *after* reignes did utterly disprove their *former* subjection. He that is rightly instructed in his *youth* will doe something worthy of his education; but those precepts which our Masters distill into the braine, are not ever rooted in the heart. Time will weare out the impression of goodnesse made upon our *tender* yeares, if not preserved and blessed by the *secret* infusions, and *continual* motions of a *divine* spirit.

XXVIII.

It is impossible to gaine the good opinion of all the world. Let my conversation be never so innocent, there will be found some detractors to under-

dervalue my reputation. If I
do ill, the *vertuous* cannot
love me; if well, the *wicked*
must needs be my *enemies*. He
that can clearly avoid the
strokes of a censorious tongue
hath more *wis* then *honesty*, and
may be presumed to comply
with all occasions to main-
taine his credit, and in that
looseth what he so sily en-
deavours to preserve. I shall
labour therefore to approve
my self to God and my con-
science; and let others say
what they please: my owne
innocency is my own satisfa-
ction.

XXX
XXIX.

ad yam Ba ytoy on ni caniz
He that sowes the *winde*,
reaps the *whirlewinde*. Bad
actions are onely fruitfull to
de-

destruction. Wickedness is al-
ways attended with death.
The end still answers the
beginning. We cannot gather
Grapes of Thornes, or Figges of
Thistles. He that meanes to
thrive, let him use those
means to which the Provi-
dence of God addes a bles-
sing. For what can any man
expect but wages answerable
to his work? The evil of sin,
and the evil of punishment go
hand in hand together; but
grace and goodnesse are united
with everlasting glory.

XXX.

Sinne in the very act may be
full of pleasure; but it always
leaves a sting behind it. The
guilt and horror lies close a
while

while in ambush, and then starts up to surprize the offender. The *devil* leads us in a dance to hell, and so leaves us to our *ruine*: like a crafty strumpet that with her flattering outside draws in the *secure* sinner to his own destruction, fits him with a fine disease in the rear of his delight. *Vain man!* How is folly ingrafted to thy very *nature*, that having so often tried the deceit of *vice*, wilt yet give credit to her pleasing smiles, and be thus courted to a miserable downfall.

XXXI.

The want of things makes them *precious*. We are scarce sensible of a *benefit* which we
enjoy.

enjoy. Before possession we think our selves miserable; and when our desires are satisfied, we growe weary of our happinesse. The fond lover can court his Mistris with Oaths and Protestations, whom afterwards he esteemes no better then his necessary drudge. A poor man knows the value of a penny, when the rich Prodigal throwes away his pounds. How sweet is Liberty and Redemption to the Captive? Health and strength to the diseased? We are eager for those blessings which are denied us, and unthankful for those which we obtain. The apprehension is still fixt upon the object which is absent, as not thinking that which is present worth a serious and stedfast view.

view. But certainly that man is most true to his owne content that can rightly value a blessing enjoyed, and comfortably use those favours which God and nature have bestowed upon him. As I would not overvalue any thing, least I be too much affected with grief in the loss, so, I will learn to know the just price of what I have, least my desire of more increase beyond all measure of satisfaction.

XXXII.

Those of the ancient *Philosophers* that were great admirers of *Eloquence* have propounded the image of an *O-rator*, as it were of one who
in

in speaking drew out the golden chaine from his *tongue*, and fastned it to the *eares* of his *Auditors*. Such vertue and power it hath to hold men to moderate and guide their affections; such is the pleasing violence of a few well placed words, that our desires seeme to be captivated and bound up to the will of the Speaker. *Truth* indeed is truth though it be plainly delivered; *Religion* can oblige the soul without these glorious bonds: yet when the daughter of *time*, and the mother of *peace* appear in their handsome *Robes*, the heart must be very stubborne and obstinate that will not yeeld it self a willing slave.

XXXIII.

There is no designe be it never so *wicked* but is masked with a pretence of some *good*: for that which is absolutely evil, and plainly appears so to be, hath no agreement with the will of man: and therefore the *worst* mischiefs are commonly set on foot under a colour and shadow of *goodnesse*. *Vice* is like a *paint-ed strumpet* which seems extraordinary faire and comely, when perhaps there is *rottenesse* in the *bones*, as well as *deformity* in the *soul*. *Treachery* and *mischiefe* have alwayes a *pleasing outside*, whereas *ver-tue* for the most part goes *plaine and naked*. Well may
D that

that man set himself out that hath nothing lovely within. Wickednesse if it be not *courtly*, will never be *courted*. And the gasty visage of sin, if it were not covered with an handsome vaile, could never tempt men to forsake their own freedome and become the servants of so vile a Mistresse.

XXXIV.

I will be *kinde* and *courteous* to all, but *familiar* with none but my *intimate* and *equal* friends; for the love of *inferiours* often-times degenerates into *contemp*. Yet I had rather my carriage should favour of too much *humility* then over-much *state*: for the affections

otions which proceed from popularity are not so dangerous as those passions of *fear* and *envy* which alwayes attend the *proud*. I will not think *my self* too good to look upon *any man*; but I will be sure that he whom I receive into my *bosome* acquaintance shall be at least as good a man as *my selfe*.

XXXV.

The death of a *Martyr* is attended with much *glory* and *renown*: who would not willingly embrace and entertaine that profession which is more precious then *life* it self? The *condemned innocent* hath sometimes converted the *unjust Judge*, and by a glorious elu-

Station over-thrown the *malice* and *envy* of his *adversaries*. *Eternity* is the reward of every true Christian: yet they that *die* for *Religion* think they purchase heaven at an *easie* rate. The lively voice of a powerful preacher is not armed with such effectual *Eloquence*. They that will not be won with *words*, cannot but admire the cheerful *Rhetorick* of their *constant* resolutions. The *Roman* ensignes never spread so farre as the *Christian* standard: and those *Red-characters* have confuted the *Egyptian* learning. If we cannot maintain this Doctrine with the losse of *life*, it is in vain to teach it with the expence of *breath*. But how far are they out of fashion that study

study to disgrace it with both;
and cannot be perswaded to
entertain this profitable in-
struction within the verge of
their opinion or practise.

XXXVI.

As we cannot live without
eating and drinking, so it is
requisite that we receive our
sustenance with that modera-
tion that no more be taken in
then is necessary for the nour-
ishment and refection of our
bodies. If we take too little,
we are guilty of Theft and
Robbery upon our selves; if too
much, of violence and oppression,
and instead of satisfaction im-
pose a burthen upon the flesh,
and for preservation induce
destruction; but the danger
D 3 that

that falls out by not observing a mediocritie is more to be feared on one side then the other. Our appetite is more apt to offend in the *excesse* then in the *defect*. They that use their daily bread as Gods blessing, cannot transgress either way; but like a skilful *Chymist* that can refine his gross materials into a pure quintessence by the Art of *sobriety*, *temperance* and *gratitude*, are wont from their *bodily* food to extract a dyet for the *soule* which shall feed and preserve it to eternal life.

XXXVII.

A counterfeite *zeale* will degenerate into *malice*. There are no such *Enemies* to the House

Houle of God as those that
seem to be the greatest friends.

A profest adversary to the
Church may be avoided; but
a close enemy will not disco-
ver his hatred till it be too
late to resist. Thus mischief
can walk in the disguise of
Religion; and Envy plays the
Jesuite in a holy mask. I will
always suspect his heart whose
tongue flames with sacred
words, when wanting their
fit opportunities, and deliver-
ed in a hasty fit of devout
passion. Be not righteous o-
vermuch is good Counsel.
For Extreame puritie will
turne at length into mani-
fest impiety.

Prov. 7.16

D 4

XXXVIII

XXXVIII.

There can be no condition of peace allowed to our souls, except, while we remain here in this earthly Garison, with our utmost strength and power we resist the rebellious corruption and tyrannicall enforcements of sin. Some learned *Criticks* would have *Peccatum*, sin, to be derived from *Pecus* a *Beast*; Properly enough if we consider the nature thereof: for by that we degenerate into a beastly disposition. How then can we expect the friendship and love of him who made us *men*, when we entertain that which deprives us (as it were) of our peculiar

liar existence and proper Being? If we make an Agreement, or keep in league with wickednesse, he that as a *friend* is able to crown his blessings with eternity, as an *enemy* to destroy without end will redouble his anger and revenge.

XXXIX.

I will endeavour to live so, as if I saw God a perpetual *spectator* of my actions. Never yet was *sinner* so destitute of *shame* and *grace*, so arm'd with impudent *boldnesse*, that he durst always act a mischief before every mans face. If I consider that God sees my *secret finnes* more plainly then any man my *best works*, I

should out of modesty forbear
to commit a shameful fault;
and out of feare to offend him
who is both *witnesse* and
Judge.

XL.

Nothing is so generally
beloved as the immortality
of a *Noble name*; and yet this
in it self confers nothing to
our *happinesse* or *misery*, either
before or *after* death: it mat-
ters not how we are censured
so we be really good; and if
we be ill, a little credit may
hide, but cannot *abate* our vile-
nesse. The *hypocrisie* of a
false renown doth rather ag-
gravate then *diminish* our un-
worthinesse. We may tram-
ple upon the *graves* of the
dead, but cannot hurt their
ashes:

asses: we may Canonize a Saint, but cannot make him such by our greatest adoration. The goodnesse of an action is in the stamp and character of its own nature, not in the value of a vain report. It were labour lost to pursue vertue, if it could be taken from us by the violence of a railing tongue. And though false witnesse may prevail for a time against the best innocence, yet the Judge of all the world cannot be unjust in his judgement.

XLI.

By the composition and stature of our bodies we are admonished how to behave our selves one towards another.

E-

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XL.

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asses: we may Canonize a Saint, but cannot make him such by our greatest adoration. The goodnesse of an action is in the stamp and character of its own nature, not in the value of a vain report. It were labour lost to pursue vertue, if it could be taken from us by the violence of a railing tongue. And though false witnesse may prevail for a time against the best innocence, yet the Judge of all the world cannot be unjust in his judgement.

XLI.

By the composition and stature of our bodies we are admonished how to behave our selves one towards another.

E-

Every man ought to dwell within his own bounds and limits, without incroaching upon his neighbours part. As there is space and roome enough in the *Head* for those operations that are there fixed, and the like in the rest of the *Members*, by reason of that good order and consenc settled amongst them: So, the world is sufficiently great to serve all, if we had but skill to bear with one another, if every man would be content with his own state and condition, and satisfie himselfe with those peculiar gifts which he hath received from our Sovereign Lord as a member of the same body.

XLII.

'Twas well said of one, *Dreams* are but *dreams*, that is, nothing but *vanity*. Yet by these a wile man can make a large discovery of his own inclination. The *night* sometimes represents things clearer than the *day*. *Sleep* (which is but the shadow of death) can furnish our soules with lively thoughts. The retired fancy is not disturbed with any outward object, and finds room enough to expatiate it self. To give credit to every dreame, and to neglect all, argues too much indiscretion in both extreames. *Superstition*, will make a *God* of nothing; *contempt*, will make

nothing of God. The *Braine* is not destitute of her vigilant motions under the greatest load of drouzie *Morpheus*. It will become our wisdom to make a useful collection of our most extravagant fancies; which we may do well enough and yet not abuse our faith with too much curiosity or observation.

XLIII.

What *miseries* attend this *life*, when our best things are but *vanity* and *vexation*. *Solomon* had a general experience of this universal frame, yet could finde nothing but *emptiness* at the bottome. The *world* was made of nothing, consists of forms worth nothing,

thing, and at last shall *re-*
turne to nothing. This will
 give our discretion wings to
 flie to heaven, the state of
 true blisse, of everlasting joy.
 As God made every thing by
 his power of nothing, so let us
 by grace from God make *no-*
thing of every thing: let us
 slight and neglect these tran-
 sitory fading toys: let us
 behold *all* as *nothing*, and be-
 hold our Lord as *All in all*.

XLIV.

He that would settle a di-
 stracted State, must first sub-
 due all his *Enemies*. To ex-
 alt a troubled Kingdom, it
 is necessary that some should
 be made *shorter* by the head.
 The *humble sheep* can never
 rest

rest securely, while the devouring wolves are at liberty. Mercy and favour prove cruel finnes when exercised upon a brood of Traitors; for the innocent suffer when such guilty men are reprieved. The members of a Common-wealth are torn in pieces, when Rebels get a head above their Souveraigne. Divisions and factions are the tortures of a Crown; and he that neglects a correction must needs fall under it. A quick dispatch is the onely cure for such desperate diseases. A Prince that stayes to hear what his good rebellious Subjects can say for themselves, does but suffer them to destroy him in a way of complement and send him to heaven for his happiness.

XLV.

We are all apt to dispute for a priviledge of *revenge*; and every man would have the power of a *King* within him and something more. The little *shrub* will contend with the lofty *Cedar* for supremacy. Therefore those *primitive Champions* underwent as hard a service in subduing their affections to be prepared for a ready submission to the wilful tyranny of some wicked Prince, as when they endured their fiery tryal, or the most subtil torments of persecution. This (I believe) was the greatest conquest. The sweet assurance of an innocent death will countervaille the

the worst extremitie of paine and miserable torture. A good conscience is a *continual feast*: or (to use the expreffion of a learned Divine) *food in famine, freedom in fetters, health in sicknesse, life in death.*

XLVI.

As the *body* cannot live except it receive such food and nourishment as is agreeable to its nature, so the *soul* cannot thrive if it want the knowledge to which it is naturally inclined. And as life is preserved by heat in our bodily parts, so the being of our *soules* consists in the apprehension of that fervor which the love of God bestows upon it. The Spirit which is separated

parated from the favour of God is in a mortal condition. The blessed estate of eternity belongs to those that are animated with the warme beams of a living mercy. The means appointed to obtain this happiness is the heavenly and eternal word, which we use as a preparative to receive those precious viands of everlasting glory.

XLVII.

Marriage is a composition of both Sexes. The Creation was imperfect till Adam parted with a piece of himself to be returned with interest. It is some kinde of an affront to Nature, if there be no impediment to reject wedlock.

lock. It is that by which the world subsists; and he that upon reasonable termes will not improve such a benefit, is an enemy to the very essence and whole constitution of man-kinde. The chastity of a single life is a rare jewel; and blessed are they that can preserve it entire: yet honest Matrimony is the best remedy, either to prevent or cure a lascivious disease. When couples joyne with mutual favour and affection the danger of temptation is not so great; but a solitary vertue is not so well armed against the fiery darts of Satan.

XLVIII.

Nothing becomes Authori-

ty

ty so well as a grave and sober moderation. Violence can never consist with peace. He that rises above his height may fall below himself. *Preferment* is a curse to him that knowys not how to use it; and many men had beene happy if they had not been exalted. A man may know his distance, and yet not part with his *humility*, for 'tis a vertue requisite in all conditions. It is good to moderate the greatness of our prosperity with humble thoughts; for he whose minde exceeds his fortune is miserable enough in the highest advancement.

XLIX.

When the tongue runnes
over

over, we may presume the heart is full of vanity. He that speaks much of himself never considers what he ought to do. His intention upon the same makes him neglect the worth of his actions. He takes it for granted that all his deeds are currant coine, and therefore is bold to assume the glory of a high renown as the natural purchase of his merit. Thus presuming that he cannot act amisse he passes by the best opportunities of doing good; and is onely great in the tinkling sound of his own applause and commendation.

L.

He that marries ineerly to
sa-

satisfie his *lust*, may chance to have an *ill* match by the bargain; for if there be not *abilities* to maintain an *estate*, as well as strength to satisfie *desire*, true love and affection will soon growe cold. We cannot feed upon beauty: imbraces will not cloath the back. A *single* man may have patience enough to endure the worse of evils; but when poverty afflicts *two* souls together, the pain is intollerable. If fortune frown upon *myself* alone, I can finde the warres a remedy for such a disease: but what grieve can be conceived greater then this, to see my *second-self* ready to starve without power of reliefe, my *little Infants* crying for bread when I have nothing

thing but my teares to comfort them: The meanest *beggar* after death is as the greatest *Prince*; but he that leaves his wife a poor widow, starves in his memory, and is miserable in his grave.

L I.

Judg. 3. 10

2 Sam. 13.
281 Sam. 4.
13

Death can finde us out when we least look for it. A *Summer Parlour* is no ominous place of destruction: yet there *Eglon* perished by the hand of *Ehud*. A *brothers feast* hath little shew of danger; yet there *Amnon* fell by the treachery of *Atsolon*. *Sitting* is a posture of *safety* and *ease*: yet *Eli* by ill news was cast down from his seat and brake his neck. The *house of God* is
no

no stage of violence : yet there *Zechariah* (or not farre from thence) was stoned by the people at the Kings Commandment. Where *Joash* found a Sanctuary, the faithful *Prophet* findes a way to his grave. The same *Joash* was slaine on his bed, a receptacle of *safe repose* and *quiet rest* ; slaine by his own *servants*, the *Ministers* of *preservation* and *defence* ; as if their *cruelty* meant to prevent his *sicknesse*, and give the first blow to dissolution. His *killing diseases* could not secure him from *violent hands*. He little thought to be killed when he was ready to die. So his latter end came upon him unawares. Nay, then was the last year of his raig and life when he expected to

E live

2 Chron.
24. 21.

Verf. 21.

live long, and rule at pleasure. The *sword* of Justice can destroy the sinner any *where*, at any *time*, beyond all expectation. And the *best* Saints sometimes are sent to heaven in a trice: though never *unprepared*, yet alwayes ignorant of the *time*; though not against their *will*, yet without their *desire*.

LII.

When God resolves to make his *wisdom* knowne by suppressing the counsels of *wise* men, it is commonly done by *small* means, and *weak* instruments; thus the *poor* man shall save the *City*: thus *Jaell* shall prevaile against *Sisera* above an army of men: thus the

Eccel. 9. 15.

Judg. 4. 11

the folly of preaching hath confounded all the *learning* of the world. To teach us that nothing can be done *without* him. The *streames* of our *strength* runne dry unless the *spring* of his *bounty* be full. The *best* knowledge, if not attendant to his *grace* will *faint* and *tire* at last, but the *least* spark of wit animated by his *goodnesse* shall mount up with *Eagles wings*. Nothing can act rightly except he inspire the motion; Yet he that looks for *Revelations*, and expects a *divine* assistance to his undertakings without all endeavour on his *own* part, intends but to deceive *himself* and *others*. As too much *confidence* in the external helps of devotion brings in *superstition*, so too much neg-

lest doth but advance *profaness*. The very name of a *University* is hateful to ignorant, *Atheists*; and *Heresies* thrives best in the suppression of all learned diligence. *Industry* and *grace* will stand well together; *strength* and *glory* have a mutual compliance: Let us not trust overmuch to the one, nor caution our selves with a conceit, of the other.

LIII.

The common people judge of *persons* and *things* by the *issue* and *event*. Their *love* is violent upon a flourishing object, and their *hate* as cruel to those whom adversity hath overthrowne. Who but a
Saul

Saul after his great victory over the Ammonites? How miserable is Job afflicted by his seeming friends? Success is the Baud to vulgar admiration, while misfortune and misery do but court contempt and hatred. Prosperity may challenge respect and observance when ragged honesty can hardly move compassion. If a good conscience did not make amends for all extremities, nothing were more miserable then vertue in a low condition. Our miseries may informe us that God himself is offended: yet such is the profit of Affliction that by it we may learn to prepare our hearts for endless joyes, and everlasting blessings.

LIV.

There is not any vice more hateful to Almighty God, nor more disdainful or ridiculous in the society of man than *pride*: whereas a modest *humility* doth procure many divine favours, and knits the souls of men in a loving sympathy; a powerful *cement*, a binding *virtue*; that glues and ties all relations together: a *center* wherein every line of the *circumference* meets: the *magnetique Lady* of all other honourable *graces*: the *Queen Regent* of all other *virtues*; whose *Scepter* is tipp'd with a commanding power to tame the most *desperate devil*, and becalm all the turbulent combustions of

a *distracted* enmity. Why should the minde disdain to be submissive to her self, to be humble in her own thoughts? if she contemplate the greatness of that *power* that can depress the *Cedars*, and bring the *hills* down to the *vallies*; that hath not spared the inhabitants of the *Heavenly* Court, but hath deprived *Lucifer* and his train of that blessed Association? God cannot endure this swelling humour which flies like stinking smoke into his nostrils, and goes out like an unfavoury snuff, that gives offence to all, and serves but to be thrown away and trod upon. Can I be proud of *beauty*, when I meet every day others farre more beautiful? Is my cox-

comb curried with a little learning? do my brains begin to crow? there are those in the world, in comparison of whom I am but a plaine dunse, a forlorne ideot, a meer ignoramus. If we have much, how much more do we want? enough to make us humble. The proud Peacock is soon taken down when he beholds the blacknesse of his feet: the mournfull Hien makes the height of pride recoil into a bashful penance: he can no more admire the glittering bravery of his feathered rainbowe. So true is that of Solomon, when pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom. Nay such is the danger of this sinne, that from thence he inferres the
consc-

Pro. 11. 2.

consequence of all mischief and
misfortune. Pride goeth before
destruction, and an haughty spi-
rit before a fall; that alone is
the cause of all jarring dis-
cord, and confusion; onely by
pride cometh contention. When
I look upon the sweet behavi-
our and humble carriage of our
great and powerful Redeemer,
I cannot but wonder at the
pride of those ambitious spirits
that can hardly brook either
Equal or Superiour. I cannot
be proud if I consider what
I am in my selfe, and what
God hath done and suffered for
me.

Ch. 16. 18

Ch. 13. 10.

LV.

Learning as well as Religion
is necessary in a Divine. Truth
may be apprehended without

much *knowledge*, but it cannot be taught without a large measure of *understanding*. A man may have faith enough for *himself*; and yet want power to infuse it into *others*. The *Arts* are nothing else but *Reason* improved; and *Divinity* though it *transcend*, does never *cross* nature. *Mortality* is a servant to *Grace*; and such a *Queen* cannot be without her *attendants*. *Conscience* and *Philosophy* may well stand together; a good Pastor is well furnished with both: Without the *first* none *will*, without the *second* none *can* rightly instruct the people.

LVI.

I will ever suspect that man
that

that makes too much haste to gaine my acquaintance. A *violent* affection goes away as fast as it comes; a fire of straw is easily kindled and quickly out. *Love* that is ripe too soon, like Summer fruit, will not hold out in the *winter* of affliction. A *durable* friendship is built upon *consideration*: He that thrusts himself upon me may be presumed to want *honesty* or *judgement*: either he hath some designe upon my *person*, or else is not worthy of my *knowledge*. *Religion* is the best ground of a *familiar society*: And I shall think that he hath but little in *himself*, that will venture upon me, not yet informed of *mine*.

LVII.

Travel to a wise man is a lesson of *experience*. The deepest Schollars cannot by their reading comprehend so much as others that want learning have seen and observed. A *narrative* information is sometimes no more then a *dreame*, many times a very *lie*; and 'tis impossible to make so good a collection of what we hear or read as of that which is clearly represented to the sight. Our *Maps* do but *contract* the understanding, which is *enlarged* by a full view and open contemplation of the place. There are some so wedded to their home that they will not approve of any voyage
into

into forraigne parts. As 'tis a practice commonly taken up by young gallants meerly for fashion sake, I cannot but condemn it; but if we go with a thrifty intention to informe our selves, and have a care to the maine chance; if Gods grace and goodnesse do not leave us when we leave our Countrey. I know not any thing that can be (especially to persons of honour, and men of great birth and fortune) more convenient, lawfull, and in some sort necessary.

LVIII.

War is our misery, and yet oftentimes proves necessary; an inevitable malady, that turns to a benefit, as it may be the means

means to prevent a greater mischief, or procure an unexpected happiness. It is the best way sometimes to expell poyson by a contrary poyson, and such destructive medicines may preserve the patient, and ruine the sicknesse. When our *Peace* is corrupted with luxurious sinites, it is time to launch it with a revengefull sword: and the *state* must be wounded to the quick to let out her putrifaction. Who would not rise from his sleep when a just cause calls him forth? when the War-like Trumpet sounds an Alarme to our drousie spirits, who is he that can willingly embrace a senseless ease? Warre is a remedy as well as a disease, though sometimes it prove a

remedy worse then the disease: brings health as well as sickness; and preserves the active minde, which having no object to work upon, consumes it self: it removes the Nobility of a decayed house, and scourges off the foule aspersions of a long contracted infamy, whether false or real: it revives the natural fire that lies raked up in dust and ashes, and stirs the heart to a generous contention.

LIX.

A good Souldier is a good man; for grace and valour are never separated. He knowes that the practise of sinne is a dishonour to his Lord, and a disgrace to that service and employment which he hath under-

undertaken. *Holineſſ* he accounts the best prize; and thinks *Religion* a thing as necessary in the field as in the Church. His carriage and conversation is most eminent and conspicuous. The most exemplary patterne of *vertue*, and severe example of *goodness*. He maintains *Christianity* with his life, and his *perfections* shine brighter than his sword. He bears a just and single heart in a righteous cause. As conscience brought him to the Warre, so that shall preserve him alive or dead: nor can he proceed valiantly in any action without it. He alwayes endeavours to march like a *Christian*, & walks worthy of his extraordinary calling. Such he esteems it, a profession

profession of extreame necessity, not like our mercenary Sword-men, a common trade of villany and destruction. The ten Commandments are his military orders: He measures Martial-Law by the decalogue; and hath skill to overcome his enemies without a breach upon that precept which forbids murder. He loves conscience better then fame; and thinks it impossible to obtain the last without the first. He carries a clear countenance in a cloudy brow; looks boldly like a lion, and as he would fright the devil and all his Host, but humbly fearful like the modest Publican at the sight of God. He is free and kinde to his friends; charitable to his worst enemies; courteous and merciful to

to his *captives*; *faithful* and *loyal* to his *Prince*; *good* and *just* to all. You may discern a *mannerly rudeness* in his *behaviour*; an *eloquent plainness* in his *speech*, *heartly* sweet expressions without *complement*. He is full of all deserving qualities, *wisdom*, *justice*, *temperance*, *liberality*: These are all companions to *fortitude* his peculiar *vertue*. He fears not the worst mischief that can befall him, and will go on though all the powers in Hell should rise to his destruction. He is confidently assured that he can lose no more then his *body*. His peace is made with heaven; and the greatest dangers of outward Warre cannot disturb that happy union. He dares

dares entertain *Death* in any habit, in any place, or at any time. He is provided in the field, and in his chamber: and every houre he expects his last houre. In the greatest storm of ill success he carries yet fair weather in his face. His countenance is the *Almanack* by which others prognosticate their hopes and expectations. If sometimes he miscarry through a light error or mistake; his pardon may be as just as merciful: nor is it fit that all former deserts should be covered in the grave of one misfortune. A toile or two will adde more strength and courage for the next engagement. Shall small offences be writ in *Marble*, and constant vertues in *fleeting sand*?

land? shall one unlucky trespass blot out the remembrance of many victories?

LX.

Me thinks the very name of *Man* should perswade us to a peaceful quietnesse: but if *natural Reason* cannot prevaile, yet the respect we have unto *Religion* the profession of a *Christian* should work effectually. When I hear the name of *Man*, I am taken with delight as conceiving him the *Subject* of peace; but when I read the title of a *Christian*, my hope is confirmed beyond expectation; yet amongst *Christians* we finde that discord which the *Heathens* would have blushed to own.

own. The *Market*, the *Court*, the *Exchange*; the *Hall*, the *Church*, all places are filled with *contention*. Such a general deluge of distraction hath overwhelmed the world, The earth is so besprinkled with the bloody Characters of *ruine*, that *peace* cannot find a place to keep her *foot-steps* dry. I look upon the *City* and there hope to finde an agreement, where all are guarded with the same *walls*, and governed with the same *Laws*, and (as men in one ship) embarked in the same *common danger*. But (oh shame!) How are all things here corrupted with *strife* and *debate*: Every house a *Bethlem*, a cage of madnesse, where every man in a distempered

pered rage corrects his fellow ? I saile out of this tempest to the Court as to a certaine *Haven of Rest*. Sure this is the *Palace of peace*: Here are men of *wisdome and state*: Here is the very *heart of the people*, and the *eye of the Common-wealth*: Here are his *Vice-gerents* who is the *Prince of peace*. The Court is the *abstract* of government and order; a place free from all tumultuary violence and unruly dissention; and all things promise fairly; *courteous* language, *sweet* imbraces, *cheerful* meetings, and other offices of *civility* and *humanity* are placed within this circle. And yet (alas!) all this is not the shadow of true peace; but painted *bravery*, and
meer

meer hypocrisie. The true discerning spirit may behold under this mask, *divided factions, secret enmity, undermining treachery. Ambition and envy, self-love, and pride,* grow up in this rank ground like ill weeds that can never be rooted out notwithstanding the best endeavours of a good Prince. That which I thought the *habitation of peace* proves a *nursery of distraction, a stage of confusion, a seminary of discord;* a curious brave modell of folly and madnes; where *contention, scorne and contempt* play their wanton revels under the disguise of *Love*. I will go to the *Schools* of the learned. *Learning* makes us men, *Philosophy* more then men, *Divinity* Saints. Surely amongst such

I cannot misse of *peace* ; but these have their *warre* too , though lesse *bloody* , yet not lesse *cruel*. One School fights with another. In the same *Academy* the *Orator* and the *Logician* are together by the ears. He thinks all the Majesty of *Eloquence* is dilated upon the palme of his *hand* ; And the other thinks all the strength of reason is contracted into his *fist*: and in this posture they enter the lists. What strange and different opinions do we finde in severall *Authors* ? and that not for the *substance* but *ceremonies*, not for the *kernel* but the *shell* of learning : a *letter*, a *syllable*, a *point* makes the difference : fighting and scolding, as if *Religion* and their *souls* lay at stake :
and

and are not more angry with themselves than with others that admire them not, conceiving every man bound to attend their loud noise with fearful reverence. The height of disputation swells into a chollerick rage; and if the matterscape the daggers point, yet there are words which cut like a razor; a sharp style that will fetch blood from the very soul, and destroy a good name. Their subtil distinction serve for no other use but to divide themselves. Whether shall I go at last, there is but one harbour left, Religion. Now certainly I am not farre from my beloved Port. I see the very Emblems and colours of peace, civil garments; I hear the very sound
F of

of peace, the name of *brother* and *sonne*, terms of *charity* and *community*, sweet *compellations*, and peaceful *salutations*, willing *instructions*, and courteous *admonitions*. Yet even among these I meet with such *Impostors* as make all this but a glorious *shew*, a rare *outside*. There is no where so much intemperance and immoderation as in matters of judgement concerning Religion. Hence it is that we find such miserable distractions in the Christian world. The *hearts* of men divide as well as their *faces*; and 'tis hard to finde two as of equal *form*, so of one *opinion*. A self-conceited *pride* rules in every breast, and no man will be bound to forsake the conceits
of

of his own brain. *Difference* in *affection* breeds *division* in *doctrine*, and *variety* of *opinions* drown the power of *love* and *peace*. I will venture once again and search amongst the *Matrimonial* assemblies for a paire of *Turtles*, an *husband* and a *wife* that will not be separated: whose *love* is contracted to one *family*, to one *fortune*, to one *bed*: who are become *one nature* in a *twofold habit*; the *same person* in a *divided skinne*, a mutual representation of *one heart* in *two souls*. Here, *affection* sits like a *Prince* attended with his *Royal* progeny, the most lovely object that can be represented to the sight; yet as in all other *Relations*, so likewise here, some difference hath

hath crept in, which oftentimes proceeds to an *absolute divorce*, or else continues in a *raging jealousie* and *mortal division*. I have but one wish more: this is the last step of my desires, that I may enjoy a resting place in the breast but of *one man*, or feel some sense of quietnesse and tranquillity in my *own heart*. I am denied this happinesse. The *same man* fights with *himself*. *Reason* warres with the *affection*; and *passion* with *passion*. We finde such a contradiction of humours in some men that they can turne into any forme. The *minde* is sometimes a *Bull*, sometimes a *Serpent*, and sometimes a *flame of fire*; and then the musick of the soule is quite out

out of tune; the Bells ring backward as in some general conflagration. Piety drives one way, Desire another. Ambition, anger, &c. a various lust divides the four quarters of this little world. This is our wilful misery. And yet we are bold to usurp the stile and title of a *Christian*, although we do agree in every thing from the most absolute pattern, and prime *Authour* of Christianity. Look upon the whole volume of his life: what can we finde written there but a doctrine of good-will, and stedfast reconciliation? what do all his precepts and parables sound of, but peace and charitable forbearance? and no wonder, for by the judgement of a Poet,

Isa. 32.17

1 Cor. 13.

13

peace is the best of things; by the sentence of a Prophet, the work of righteousness; by the decree of an Apostle, the greatest vertue; for this is that charity which like a true Doctor of peace he prefers before the tongues of men and Angels, before the gift of Prophecy, above all mysteries, and all knowledge, and all faith,

LXI.

We may observe that in times of danger and destruction, good men are little regarded, and for the most part live obscurely. In this injustice of the world the goodnesse of God is most conspicuous. When
the

the *birds* of prey are flut-
tering abroad, the careful *hen*
calls in her *chickens* to the safe
protection of her *wings*; when
the street is filled with *vi-
olence* and *tumults*, the tender
parent locks up the children
within doores, not denying
them their *liberty*, but thus
providing for their *safety* and
security. What greater hap-
pinesse then a quiet close re-
tiring roome, when blood and
ruine are making merry with-
out? Can we complaine of
obscurity, when scarce any
open place is *secure* e-
nough? How happy was
the *Church* under ground,
when in that darknesse there
was *light* enough to see *hea-
ven*? In that narrow impris-

1 King. 19
18

sonment they were yet free from persecution. Those *seven thousand* which *Elijah* knew not of were well known to him that preserved them. And when *Elijah* himself was sought for by *Jezebel*, where had he been if he had been *every where*? They that have *strength* enough to *burn* in glorious flames, may scorne to save themselves by *flight*; but if God afford this help to our weaknesse, we have reason to be thankful for an easie judgement, which appointed as the means of our deliverance turns into a blessing. Let me be *separated* from the comfortable society of my dear friends, *deprived* of the benefit of my owne countrey aire, *exposed* to
misc-

misery and the contempt of
 strangers, *alwayes* forgotten,
 never observed, let me be an
 obscure dark inmate, a son of
 earth, an *ignominious* bastard
 in the worlds opinion, a neg-
 lected slave; but I shall think
 this disgrace a great honour,
 if I may rest safely under the
 shadow of the Almighty.

LXII.

Although mans greatest ex-
 cellency above other creatures
 consists in the nobility and
 worth of his soul; yet there
 are other points of high va-
 lue and concernment in the
 matter, forme and use, of all
 the parts of which the body is
 composed, not to be found in
 any other creature besides

Man. Whereby we are taught, that Almighty God having prepared and built this earthly lodging for such a spiritual guest; it is therefore not to be neglected; no not after the dissolution. Our bodies are the bodies of immortal souls; whilst living not to be abused by intemperance; when dead not to be cast away with a dishonourable neglect. Our Members are the Organs of a divine Spirit, without which it cannot exercise those admirable faculties; from whence proceed all those operations of grace and vertue, which make men great and famous in the world; favourites of heaven, and glorious Saints. Our happinesse is not compleat till
both

both meete. They that str
 Troy and vilifie this our
 world fabrick, as much as in
 them lies endeavour a perpe-
 tual divorce and separation.

LXIII.

The heart is the *spring* of
 life, and the *fountain* of all
 vitall spirits dispersed into e-
 very part of the body: yet
 notwithstanding this prehe-
 minence and dignity it can-
 not subliste without the coole
 refreshing of the *lungs*, or the
veines proceeding from the
liver, or the *strings* of the
sinews, or the necessary sup-
 port and guard of the *ribs* and
bones; which are as so many
 strong Forts and Bulwarks on
 every side. Thus the greatest

men

men who in regard of their power and authority have the lives of others at their command, are yet so farre from being able to maintain their own greatnesse, that without the aid and defence of *inferiours* they must needs fall to dust. Nothing but *Almighty God* is absolute of it selfe, and there is not any thing that depends not in such sort, at least of something else, as that it cannot remain long in any firm state and condition without the service of another. Who then can be so proud as to advance *himself* above his *neighbour*, in such an high conceit as not to knowe he may want the *least* of Gods creatures for his preservation. No man is great

great but by comparison; which implies so much defect that he stands in need of more then what he hath, or is, to constitute the worth or being which he enjoys.

LXIV.

The *Newter* is an *Hermophrodite* in his opinion. One of little use or benefit to his Countrey. He dares hardly professe any religion, but for the time thinkes that best which is most prevalent. We may well wonder to see the strange distractions of *Church* and *Common-wealth*; but we may wonder more that any should be so *indifferent* to partake of either side; such men love *truth* onely for their *ease*,
and

and can easily dispencc with
conscience for a little *pleasure*.
 But they that are thus content
 to serve *two* Masters at once,
 shall have none but the *devil*
 to serve at last. He that
 will halt between two opini-
 ons can never go upright in
 his conversation; and we may
 safely conclude that that man
 hath little grace that hath too
 much Religion.

LXV.

We may finde by experi-
 ence that our *inward* corrupti-
 ons are more dangerous than
outward provocations. There is
 no such baie as the affection
Self; which many times be-
 trays the *sweetest* natures, and
 best dispositions to an unruly
 wan-

wantonnesse. Lust is a Serpent,
which if once entertained
windes it self into the Soul,
and gnawes the Conscience
while it destroys the body;
till in the end it prove an in-
extricable misery of madness.
When the memory shall re-
collect the secret pleasures of
our wanton youth, and knows
not whether to entertain them
with horror or delight, but is
feaver-shaken betwixt both,
being kept warm with the
remaining embers of desire,
and benumbed with the feare
of hell, what a hard knot will
this be to untie; what a la-
byrinth to get out of; what
a riddle to resolve: if there
were no other remedie the
due consideration of the ho-
linesse of God were a suffi-
cient

cient coercion from this evil. When I contemplate the *di-
vine Nature*, void of all *pro-
fanesse* and *filthy corruption*,
so full of *purity* and *absolute
perfection*; that will not endure
the least defilement of sinne,
my thoughts run round in a
desperate carere, I begin to
condemn my self, and almost
repent that I was made a
man. How is it possible to
please him that can delight
in nothing but a spotlesse in-
nocence, while we bear about
us this heavy burden of miser-
able uncleannesse. How was
the *wisdom* of *Solomon* befool-
ed that could not shut his
eyes from beholding this va-
nity? where was the *vertue*
of those holy *Patriarchs* that
could not drive off such a
wick-

wickednesse? what was the integrity of *Dauids* heart that would entertain such a deceitful monster? was this the unhappinesse of their condition; and can I be free? *Lord!* what flesh and blood are we made of, if circumvented with the necessity of such a sinful misery? which yet by the contemplation of the infinite and celestial beauty, may be restrained, though while we dwell here in this earthly Tabernacle, we cannot procure a total suppression. How can I runne into any actual transgression of dishonesty if I believe the God of chastity cannot behold such a debauchment without offence? When therefore I feele a wanton provocation

on

Gen. 39.9

on dancing in my blood, and the fire of lust begin to keep hot unchaste revels in this consecrated Temple, I use no other charm but thus whisper to my self, *How can I do this great evil and sinne against God.*

LXVI.

Those afflictions strike deepest which bereave us of the object of our love. How many parents are unwilling to be rid of a charge by the losse of a child, desiring still to be happy in the riches of their poverty? How loath was David to part with his rebellious *Sonnes*, loving him better then the safety of his *Crown* and *Kingdome*? There is a kind of *Empire* in the minde that will

will enjoy nothing but what it *likes*, and had rather want it self then her peculiar pleasure? We are so devoted to the subject of our desires, that we seem to die in the departure. The *active soul* cannot but appropriate her selfe to some *delight*, which when it failes, must needs leave behinde it the torment of a sad *discontent*. It will be our wisdom therefore to settle our *affections* upon those things which never perish, which can both *satisfie* in the *enjoyment*, and not be *lost* in the *pursuit*; which will neither *weare out* in the *fruition*, nor *slip from us* in our *expectation*. Such is *God*; and he that relies upon any thing without relation to him, shall be sure to loose his

his hould, and cannot possibly obtaine the benefit of a perpetual satisfaction.

LXVII.

Good Counsel should be welcome from whomsoever it comes. The *advice* of a *Servant* is sometimes the best part of his service. An *inferiour* may direct though he cannot command; and he that will not receive any directions, because it proceeds, from one below him, is possessed with a scornful spirit of contradiction, which favours more of pride than wit. A *pearl* may be taken up though it lie in the *dunghill*; and 'tis madnessse to reject a benefit in a mean benefactor. *Humility* should

should instruct us that the *best* of us are but *men*, and the *worst* are no less. Our *humanity* makes us subject to *error*, which another may see better than our *selves*. We may justly presume that he that will never be advised by one *under* him, would not willingly submit to any *above* him.

LXVIII.

There are *secrets* that cannot well be communicated to our *dearest* friends, nor will any reasonable man desire to know all that another knows; yet some men are of such a searching nature that they will sift every corner of the heart, and never rest satisfied
till

till informed of that which perhaps will but trouble them when revealed. This is a mistake of those that think there is no greater obligation of friendship then a mutual participation of each others thoughts; and indeed the relation must needs be very great that depends upon such a trust. Yet there may be that in the minde which cannot be imparted without a wound to the receiver, nor extracted without violence; and such importunity doth mar the peace and content of affection. I will ever reserve in my self a power of *concealment* whether the matter concerne me alone or another. There are some griefes that finde *ease*, others that grow *worse*

merse by discovery. I will give my sorrows vent if the vessell be two full; but if there be no danger of dissolution, 'tis best without meere harm to let them lie still smothered up within a silent breast, lest breaking loose they get fresh aire, and maintain a new life to encrease my affliction.

LXIX.

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Good Order is the life and soule of Government. In the external frame of nature we may observe a regular disposition and uniformity of creatures. The *Heavens* walk in a constant course of circular motion. The *Sea* ebbs and flows at certain seasons. All things

things have their just *beginning, progress and dissolution*; *confusion and disorder* dwell no where but in *Hell*; and the wicked man is but an *irregular limb* of that Region. *Disorderly tumults* proceed from the *Prince of darknesse*, whose Kingdome is but a medly of *violence and rebellion*. *Factionous* men are of the *Devils* kindred; still perplexed in disturbing others. One jarring string puts all the rest out of tune; one unruly companion will spoile the peace of a faire society. I shall endeavour to keep my mind within a reasonable compass; for if the least *passion* once usurp upon the *intellectual faculties*, I shall be no more able to governe my selfe then a little *Infant*
or

or a *mad-man* to hold the
reynes of a *Common-wealth*.

LXX.

There is a *moderate* use of
the *Creatures* which exceed
not the bounds of *temperance*;
and he is most miserable that
denies himself this freedom.
Mirth is a jewel if beset with
modesty; otherwise but a
light toy to please trivial
Apes and wanton Girles. No-
thing doth lesse become hu-
manity then a scurrilous and
abusive wit. To laugh at the
imperfections of others implies
a kind of *malice* that must be
fed and maintained with con-
tinual *mischief*. *Charity* com-
mands a strict inquiry into our
neighbours *goodnesse*; which
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by a liberall commendation must be discovered unto the world ; while *defects* and *errors* are laid up in a silent grave ; and may sooner be reformed by *example*, then confined by *disgrace*. If the *heart* be clear, the *brain* will not run in a muddy channel. If my *thoughts* be disposed to entertain some sport and mirthful solace, I will be sure not to transgresse the limits of a *charitable* indulgence, a *chast* behaviour, and a *religious* integrity. I will play within the lists, and not range abroad ; then I shall not need to say, I am sorry for what I have said ; or follow my invention with this unprofitable complaint, *with, whicher wilt thou ?*

LXXI.

Of all afflictions, *poverty* is none of the least: which to some is more terrible then death it self. And truly, what can more afflict a generous mind then a penurious want? yet against this and other miserable events of our various life I have a sufficient cordial from the powerful vertue of my Religion. I have learnt therefore to be thankful in the lowest condition. The course of this world is full of change, so that I am never dejected with the terror of my own wants, knowing that the next day or houre may make a prize. Our happinesse is no exhalation

LXXI G 2 drawn

drawn from any earthly matter, but like the *Sunne* in the circle sometimes clouded never put out, continues an everlasting race of glory. *Poverty* is not the object of my feare, which though unexpected may finde chearfull entertainment: nor shall the tyranny of a cruel *want* make me sacrifice my soule in sighs and tears. Brown-bread and the Gospel is the best fare said Master *Bradford*. However if I cannot fancy so great a happiness, I will yet keep fast my integrity. The greatest *Crosse* shall not force me to be *dishonest*. I think I should rather starve then play the *parasite* for a morsel of bread.

LXXII.

Only the heart of man can make him miserable: for our afflictions depend much upon *opinions*, and we had rather suffer with *repining* than be happy with *content*. He that beares his necessities without *murmuring* may be subject to the gripes of *fortune*, but cannot be overwhelmed with *misery*. I can look upon the riches of other men with the same minde that I behold my own *poverty*, and make as great a benefit of that as some of their increase. I shall not envy the rich mans *superfluity*, if I can but enjoy the sweetness of my *low content*. I have
fo

so much joy laid up in store as will enable me to congratulate the greatest extremitie. I admire not the glorious state of *wickednesse*; but therein contemplate the justice of *Divine Providence*: for *vertue* is not distinguished by any sensible reward from *vice*. And who dares consult with the eternal *wisdom*; or who can compare with *Omnipotence*? This makes me *cheerful* in the greatest calamity, and contemne all worldly things in respect of an honest *fame*.

LXXIII.

I know the separation of the *body* and *soul* in regard that nature abhors all *evacuation*,

ation, dis-union, and dissolution, may be said to be *unnatural*: yet I can apprehend this dis-junction as a necessary means to a more glorious reintegration and incorruptible union. I know that there is a *mutual* relation and commerce, a *friendly* society and *interchangeable* conversation betwixt these two: Yet I can see an image of Divinity, a picture of heaven, an *impress* of eternity, in the inward part, which cannot appear and shine forth in its true lustre, in that *genuine* purity and brightnesse till this dirty clay, this red earth, this body of dust be scoured off and refined for a resurrection. I know that both shall meet againe so purified, so

rarified, so together glorified,
as now I cannot conceive an
expression to certifie my un-
derstanding, but can under-
stand enough to strengthen
and confirme my faith. I
believe and know that both
shall be renewed with such
perfection and absolute grace
that there shall be no roome
left fit for a *temptation*, for a
disease: the *Soul* without *hope*;
or *fear*, or *anger*, or *grief*;
free from all tumultuary
passion, and rebellious *lusts*:
the *body* free from all *paine*,
and *anguish*, and *sicknesse*; the
whole man void of all necessity
of *sin* and *misery*. I will not
fear *death* that is the occasion
of all this blessednesse. *Life*
is nothing else but a *progresse*
unto *death*; and *death* is no-
thing

thing else but an *entrance* into life. I know it is the *end* of all *misery*, and the *beginning* of all *happineſſ*. Against the *fear* of death, and the *deſire* of death, I do thus conclude. I will ſo *live* that I may die *happily*; I will ſo *die* that I may live *eternally*. Lord, give me thy *grace* here, and I will not doubt of thy *glory* hereafter.

LXXIV.

Let our *course* of life be what it will we ſhall finde *miſery* enough. *Abroad*, the *Courts* of *Justice* torment us as much as our own *cares* at *home*. The *Countrey* is a kind of *oppreſſion* with continual *labours*; the *Sea* a *confuſion* of *dangers*. *Travel* if we go

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out

out rich, is but a temptation of spoile and rapine; if poore, a provocation of scorne and contempt. Matrimony is no more then a conjunction of mutual calamities; and a single life, a solitary mischief. Children are monuments of care; and barrenness a curse of Oblivion. Youth is a tormenting fury; Age a slump of weaknesse. What is all this life of ours which we dote upon so much but a point of time, a little grain of salt, a summer flower, a fading pleasure; and yet sleep like a severe Publican and other idle diversions our officious enemies toile away above half this inconsiderable stock of nature. What is Man but an Earthen vessel, a fraile bottle,

bottle, a statue of snow or wax that melts at every blaze and will admit any impression; a rotten chip, a withered leaf, a coarse thread spun out into Atomes. This is that animal *ἐπίσχυρον*, a creature for a day, that starts up like a mushroom, and vanishes like a shoure of frogges. All things under the Sunne are vanity; but he is *All* vanity: a circle, a whimsy, a figure, a fancy, a feather, a trifle, a nothing, a dream of a shadow, and the shadow of a dream. He is but a living carcasse, a walking Ghost: something in a trance, a monument of death. If this be our condition while we live, who would not be ambitious to die?

LXXV.

We are but *generated* dust at first, and at last *degenerated* ashes. The *soul* in the body is but confined as it were to some dark prison. The *grave* is not so strait a lodging to the *body*, as the *body* is to the *soul*; for the *body* is not sensible of this narrow imprisonment, but the *soule* every day feels the iron weight of her fleshly fetters. The *flesh* is a burden to the *soul*: are we afraid of *ease*? we shall never finde *rest and quiet* till God the Lord and proprietary call for his abused talent, and repose it safe in those eternal Mansions. What a benefit is this to be deprived

prived of that darknesse and
stupidity which hindred our
prospect? to be eſtated in
an unchangable condition?
to enjoy an undeterminable
felicity? why ſhould we be
leſſe unwilling to put off this
fleſhly garment than we
are to undreſſ our ſelves e-
very night? why ſhould we
be loath to change this vile
body for eternity? to ſhift
this thread-bare-coat to be
ſuperinveſted with immortal
glory? what but ſome ſtrange
miſbelief and infidelity can
obſtruct the deſire of this
happy diſſolution? The world
is full of *miſeries*; and hea-
ven is full of *bleſſings*; e-
nough to excite the moſt dull
heart to pant after this glo-
rious change. *Death* in it
ſelf

self is *nothing*: are we afraid of nothing? are we frightened with a *Chimera*? How shall I encounter with an *Host*; if I tremble at a *shadow*? There is nothing fearful in death if we embrace it with a good conscience. An *honest* man cannot die a *dishonest* death. It is reported of the Emperour *Vespasian*, that when he lay upon his death-bed breathing out his last, he made a sudden start, and raised himself upon his feet. Being requested to lie down again, he refused, and yeelded up his spirit with these words, *Oportet imperatorem stantem mori*, It behoves an Emperor to die standing; which with a little change may become the mouth of a good Chri-

Christian, *Oportet Christianum triumphantem mori*, It behoves a Christian to die triumphing.

LXXVI.

Every day we suck in fresh aire and breath it out again. Our very Being is but an Emblem of mortality; but after death we are no more dead: then we live indeed when we cannot die. Here we die many deaths, but hereafter we shall live one everlasting eternal life. Here we are subject to many inconveniences, and much distresses, there we are free from all. Who would not more willingly pass out of this world, and (if it were lawful) thrust

thrust himself out than stay
behinde in a throng of woful
confusions; can there be a
worse *Hell* then is exercised
on *Earth*? if there be any
greater torment then the guilt
of sin, sure it is prepared
for those that remaine mis-
erable in the judgement:
What is it that doth so trou-
ble our apprehension? O-
ther afflictions because *unfual*
and *familiar* we endure well
enough; by *acquaintance* with
our misery we can arme our
selvs against the *violence* of for-
tune, the *fury* of injustice, the
raging of poverty, the *cruelty*
of a Tyrant. *Familiarity* (they
say) breeds *contempt*: now
what more common then
Death? what more *natural*?
what a world is gone before

us?

us?

us? of all sorts and degrees? Kings, Prophets, Martyrs? Philosophers, Atheists, Magicians? And what a world will follow after? Then why do we look upon this monster with such a fearful reverence? This is the publique lot of all generation and corruption. Let the manner of our death be what it will; violent, or natural; painful, or sudden, or strange; let the cause be extrinsecal, or intrinsecal; from within, or from without; death it is no more but death, and what every living thing must feele. Plants wither, Flowers fade, Beasts perish, and old men die, and young men too; 'tis but a defect of heat, an eclipse of natural light. The necessity
and

Job 17. 14

and inevitable certainty of death well considered may advance our courage, and banish all fear. It they that delivered us into the world are themselves delivered out of it; we may easily conclude our own mortality, and say to corruption, *Thou art my Father; to the worme, thou art my mother and my sister.* The whole *Common-wealth* of man is subject to this *universall Law.* Let *unregenerate* men afright themselves with this suspicion; the *Religious* heart is brim full of joy and assured confidence in the meries and mercy of a powerful *Saviour.* The faithful Christian hath learnt his lesson before-hand in the practise of an honest life: He knowes death

death to be a *liberal Science*,
an *Art of freedom* and *pre-
ferment*, of *priviledge* and *im-
munity*, of *recompence*, of *glory*
and *immortality*. To *wicked*
guilty foules, death is both
terrible and *odious*: because it
puts an *end* to their *transito-
ry joyes*, and *begins* their *e-
verlasting grief* and *torment*:
But to the *gracious heart*, this
furious fiend appears in the
forme of a *most lovely friend*.
It prepares him for another
world while he is going out of
this. Here is advantage e-
nough to make amends for e-
very loss. *To die is gain*. He
that led captivity captive,
and swallowed up death in
victory, is ready with *em-
bracing armes* to receive and
entertain us. This *glutton*
that

Phil. 2. 21.

that devoures all flesh, is meat
for every true spirit. Through
the cold jawes of death we
finde entrance to eternal life.
When death labours to block
up all passages, it findes and
makes way for us to our im-
mortal happinesse.

LXXVII.

God and a good Christian are
always good company. He
cannot want the accommo-
dation of any place who en-
joys the presence of him that
is every where. Let me be
barr'd the society of my best
friends, deprived of the com-
fortable aire of my own coun-
trei, not suffered to see the
face of any man that affects
me and my welfare; in all
this

this deprivation of outward happinesse, I can yet behold his face who is all *goodness*, and *comfort*, and *content*; who instead of pleasing discourse to pass away the time, I can afford me the blessed operations of his holy Spirit. As it was said of *Athanasius*, he fled for the Trinity, and with the Trinity; So, if I be carried to the utmost corners of the earth, or confined to a dark solitude, a narrow prison, a loathsome dungeon, in such a strict restraint I shall finde roome enough to *contemplate*, to *enjoy*, to *admire*, to *adore* three persons in one Deity, I shall have courage enough to hope for the happy interview of Saints and Angels at the resurrection, to be one of that
hea-

heavenly association which shall never be dissolved.

LXXVIII.

That mans *wisdom* is meere folly that reproves another in his *wrath*. Good counsel is then *unseasonable* and therefore *unreasonable*; but when his *anger* is past he will be more apt to *understand* his fault, and more ready to *mend* it. When the *minde* is in a *calme*, our advice may saile over it with ease; but in a *raging* tempest the best admonitions run upon a desperate rock, and their labour is but cast away. *Physicians* are not wont to administer in the height of a *Fever*: nor will any *wise* man apply physick

physick to the soul in a distempered fit of *madnesse*.

LXXIX.

A Wise man is always more ready to *hear* then to *speak*. It is well observed, that *Nature* hath given us *two ears* and but *one tongue*: as intimating that there is more need of *those* then of *that*. This unruly instrument is oftentimes the shame of others and the owners ruine. We read of none that ever were undone by *hearing*, but thousands by *speaking*. The *ear*, though it may receive, cannot possibly reach any evil; but the other talkative Organ may discharge such mischief and folly as can never be recalled.

LXXX.

LXXX.

I would not desire to be made a Judge betweene *two friends*, but endeavour all I can to *reconcile* them. So shall I gaine the increase of a double love, and obtaine a blessing from heaven for procuring peace. But if the controversie be decided on either side, I am sure to lose a *friend*, whose *ill will* may hurt me more then the others *favour* can do me *good*. So, though my judgement be never so upright, I am like to get little by the bargain.

LXXXI.

LXXXI.

Nothing doth lesse represent
a sound and active resolution
than *anger* or *revenge*. The *Phi-*
losophers place this *Passion* in
that part of the soul which is
unreasonable, as conceiving
that, the fittest habitation for
so wilde a guest. It is said
that the anger of *Kings* is
great. *The Kings wrath is as the*
roaring of a lion. But this is
no part of their *greatness*, ex-
cept attended with *Justice*.
And in that sense our great
Peace-maker did accept of
that *Motto* to his standard. *Est*
Nobilis ira Leonis. God him-
self whose just priviledge it is
to be *angry*, yet is quickly pa-
cified. *His anger endureth but*

Pro. 19. 12

Plal. 30. 5

a moment. And shall men that are *unjust* in their wrath accept of no *satisfaction*? will no length of time abate the strength and unruly violence of their furious spirits? The same God is as backward to entertaine a displeasure, as ready to forgive. For amongst his other attributes of mercy this is one, *slow to anger*. For our parts we are suddenly apprehensive, but never forgetful of the least offence. A perverse and froward disposition is quite opposite to the nature of our heavenly father. Doth he deserve the name of *Man* that is sensible of every wrong, and hath not *will* and *power* to strangle his passion in the *birth*, and at the first insurrection suppress that

that chollerick matter with a careless smile? How much better is it to *contemne* than *imitate* the folly of another? If any man think to hurt me with an angry malice, shall I be his Ape to do the like? To revenge an *others* fury with my *own* is a grosse absurdity. How can I be justly angry with *him* when I am angry with my *selfe*? If I *neglect* an injury, the standers by will understand that I am wronged: If my *chollar* rise, I shall but raise a ground for my adversarie to plead a cause; so the difference will be propagated to an endless strife. Enmity encreaseth. The wound is kept bleeding till at last it prove incurable; but by a milde forbearance we

may purchase the very love of our enemies. This is the best way of conquest, to overcome without blows; to conquer not only the *power*, but the *affections* and *will* of an adversary: What can be more honourable than for *malice* to obtain mercy, for *cruelty* compassion, for *hatred* friendship? The evil which we think to drive away by an indiscreet revenge will return with Usury: and thus we make a reciprocal bargain of inveterate hatred. When both sides demand satisfaction and neither side will grant it, what can be expected but everlasting discord? what shall be the period of such a controversy? By *repining* at an injury we make it our own; and

and then it may well hurt the Authour. Who would be willing to do himself a mischief? He that loves *himself* cannot hate his *neighbour*. For my own sake I will forbear a revenge; for whatsoever hurt another may suffer thereby, I am sure to feeble the smart at home. What unequal injustice is this? We can soone forget a great benefit, but never lose the remembrance of a small displeasure: and when perhaps the same man had a good intention in both: and when we also have offended in a greater measure. In point of *policy* I will pardon him, that by my example he may be compelled to favour me. Can he expect forgiveness from *God* that will not forgive

Mat. 6. 12.

his neighbour? We cannot hope for more then we are willing to part with. How can I addresse my selfe to the Throne of grace with any confidence or hope of reward, when my own prayers shall prove me a notorious liar? how can I from my heart say, *Forgive us as we forgive*, when I am resolved never to forgive?

LXXXII.

Some would have this word *Ira*, *Anger*, to be derived from *uro*, to *burn*: because it burns and consumes all before it. It consumes the *lodging* wherein it lies, the *heart*; it consumes the *object* whither it goes; and looks death and destruction upon every thing in the way.

So

So the Philosopher defines it, *A burning (or boiling) of the blood, or an exuberancy of heat about the heart.* Or you may derive our word *Anger* from *Ango*; which first signifies to *strangle* or *suffocate*; and then by Metaphor to *torment*, *vex*, *grieve*, or *trouble*, as well the *mind* as the *body*. And this reaches to both: it destroys the vital parts, and hinders the due operation and exercise of the intellectual faculties: it puts all out of frame and order. So the moral definition fits very well; which terms this troublesome grief *ὀρεξις ἀσπληνέως*, *appetitus re-*
contristationis, an appetite (or desire) of interchangable sorrow, of continual distraction. Others would have *Ira* come

from *Ire*, to go, because the angry man goes out of himself and runnes mad: but whither he will go, or where he will stop, God knows; for the devil drives him. If he be so mad to increase the flames, let him enjoy his fiery death alone. Let him *live* like the Salamander, and *die* like the *Phenix*. Oh sweet revenge! I would be loath with my load of mutual wrath to increase the Funeral Peal. It is the sweetest revenge to forget an injury. If thou be angry indeed, let not the *person* but his *sin* offend thee. *Be angry, and sin not.* Be angry with sin, or else you *sin* in not being angry. Be angry with *any thing* but sin, and you cannot but *sin* in being angry. Be angry and
sin

fin not, be not angry and fin.
Consider betimes what thou
hast done or said in thy in-
considerate wrath which with-
too late repentance thou mayst
wish were now made void.
Whosoever is angry with his bro-
ther without a cause shall be in
danger of judgement, saith our
Saviour. When the blood
begins to revel in your veines,
give this sudden check to that
rebellious motion. I am
strangely affected now; but I
shall be of another minde by
and by. Why should I deli-
ver that in *anger* which can-
not be unsaid when I am *plea-*
sed? why should I do that
now in these mad fits which
will vex me when I am well
in my wits? After a *showre* of
wrath comes a *flood* of grief.

Mat. 5. 22.

Cannot Religion, and Piety, and Conscience obtaine that of me at this instant which a little time will enforce.

LXXXIII.

The best way to suppress *Anger* is to *compose* and *fold* up the affections that they may never ravel out, that there may be no commotion, or at least no appearance of sedition, or disturbance in the irascible faculty. *Not to be angry at all* is the best character, the most fit similitude, the sweetest representation of the Deity. To overcome evil with good, to assuage the malice of a wicked heart, with the goodnesse of a temperate disposition, is the perfection

fection of Christian charity. To *restrain anger* is the part of a *discreet man*, a *valiant champion*; but to *give way* to the violence of this wild passion is farre beneath the dignity of humane nature: I am loath to wrong the *sensual* creatures with a comparison. When we see a man set out with this brave demeanour of his parts; a flaming eye, cheeks somewhat pale, and sometimes red, a wry mouth, foaming lips, trembling joynts, a roaring voice, a wavering and inconstant gesture; this verily is the posture and complexion of *Mars* himself. He that knows how to use a looking glass, may thus circumscribe every limb, and in spite of his Creation make himself a *Beast*. Nothing can

can represent a man so *deformed* and *ugly* as this foule *Vice*. The difference betwixt an inraged person and a frantick man, we finde to be no more than betwixt a short and a continual madnesse. *Anger* is a fit of frenzy, and that a perpetuity of rage; madnesse both: the difference is onely in the *time*. Both the same disease, though one more violent; or one an *ague*, the other a *Feaver*: which agree in *quality*: though not in the *extent* and *power*: and sometimes one succeeds the other: an *Ague* multiplies into a *Feaver*; and *anger* begets *madnesse*, with the succession of many supernumerary evils. To conclude: If thou finde it an hard task to appease a *raging*

ging spirit, think what the *Saviour* of the world suffered in thy behalf. What made him lay down his beloved soul for thee an injurious and despightful enemy? with what *meekness* did he suffer *reproach*, and *bonds*, and *stripes*, and *wounds*; a medley of cruel torments? and to close up his stomack, a *disgraceful ignominious* death? why doest thou boast of thy relation to the *Head*, if thou wilt not maintaine an entire friendship and union in the *body*? If thine enemy be not worthy of *pardon*, then surely he is not worth thine *anger*. Nevertheless, he deserves more from thee, than thou canst expect from God. Thou hast felt the experience of a loving

mercy, and wilt use nothing but extream *severity*. The least offence against the Majesty of heaven, is more than all the injuries or injustice that the world can give ; yet the infinite power is willing to look over, and passe by , many *finnes* and *transgressions*, to renew and confirme his innumerable mercies notwithstanding all affronts , expecting onely repentance and future amendment.

LXXXIV.

It is some kinde of happiness to be under *restraint*. The *wide world* affords many mischiefs , of which we are free in a *prison*. A man can hardly go abroad and preserve his
own

own innocence ; such is the contagious infection of sinne, that it spreads it self into our *hearts* through our *eyes* : we can scarce behold wickedness and be safely honest. Conversation is full of danger ; so that he which enjoys his liberty may want protection. Besides security, in imprisonment we have the benefit of contemplation. The *soul* can best enlarge her faculties when the *body* is a close prisoner. Then the *Spirit* will expatiate it selfe, when the *flesh* is confined to a narrow roome. The *Tower* and the *Fleet* have produced many works which shall prove their Authors famous to posterity ; who perhaps if they had not bin *buried* thus alive, had died in obscurity :

tie: neither their *persons*, or their *knowledge* had been ever known. The light of grace shines forth in the darkest dungeon: and we may finde the way to heaven though wanting elbow-room. This use we may make of our worst miseries, and thus be contented with our discontents.

LXXXV.

When wicked men are *full* of iniquity, then God makes empty the vials of his wrath; till then his own deare Saints must *expect* their deliverance. The *Amorites* are reprieved to the *fourth* generation; but judgement comes at *last*, and cannot be resisted: *great* provocations leave us no roome
for

for mercy. The voice of blood cries for revenge. Fruitful sins growe into punishment. When the harvest of folly is ripe, then our heavenly Father puts in the sickle of his justice, that he may reap to himself glory out of our corruptions. Those that use Cart-ropes to draw on vanity, deserve to be lashed with a cordy whip. When head and heart, when hands and feet, are imployed in continual mischief, when all interests are improved, and all means used to a sinful end, what can be expected but utter confusion. A stiff-necked people must be hardly dealt with. If sin grow impudent, the judge will not be modest, or moderate in his anger. A brazen forehead may be blasted

ed with *iron lungs*. When sinners never stop but at judgments, they must look to be well paid for their paines. It is fit that their *wages* should be answerable to their *work*. There is a day of Recompence wherein every man shall receive his due. All accounts must be made even: they that have done *much* shall obtaine *more*, whether of *good* or *evil*.

LXXXVI.

The greatest *mercies* are best observed in the depth of *misery*. As a black foyle to a sparkling Diamond, such are our afflictions to the goodness of God. Though nothing can give addition to his glory, yet then his grace appears most

most graceful to us when set off by the shadow of our miseries. Continual prosperity is an oppression to the soul, whereas happinesse after suffering fills the heart with active joy. If we suffer alwayes, our pains cannot be *long* because life itself is *short*; but a *good* name which follows it, is *everlasting*. The advantage of a faire report after death will swallow up the judgements of our present time; the *dark mist* of our mournful condition cannot obscure the *brightnes* of such a favour, if we have but faith enough to apprehend it. Gods mercy is more wonderful in *deliverance* then in *preservation*. Where there is more *danger* there is more *honour*. The state of *Redemption* is better then

then that of *innocency*. Had *Adam* never fallen, *Christ* had never risen to our justification. We that were cut off by *sin* and *death* are made lively monuments of rich *compassion*. This is our wonder: this is the greatness of his good will, when we are delivered from the very jaws of destruction, then it plainly appears that his *mercy is above all his works*.

LXXXVII.

The *Doctrine* and *discipline* of the *Church of England* is such as was first established by general *Councils* and *Synods*, and afterwards confirmed by the *Laws of the State*. *Unity* and *uniformity*; *necessity* and *order*, *strength* and *beauty*, are the ingredients

gredients of our religion: and who would not love such a wholesom sweet composition. They that take a delight to broach *new opinions*, to introduce *strange innovations*, cannot wish well to the peace of our aged mother. It may be needful to *repaire* a breach, but 'tis neither wisdom, nor justice to *pull down* the frame of an *ancient building*, to make way for an alteration. God blesse us from such a *reformation* that must be advanced in the *ruines* of a wel-setled Government and constitution.

LXXXVIII.

The Schismatick is a creature that abhors the very name of a *Counsel* or a *Synod*. He
cannot

cannot endure the weight of an obligation to any Law: for he thinks himself advanced in an higher degree of glory then weakly to submit to the tuition of an external government: He hath found out a nearer way to heaven then by following the doctrine of the *Catholick Church*. He makes no account of *Canonical* obedience, but as a quality only fit for them that weare the livery and mark of the *Beast*. Subordination to a *Superiour* power, whether *civil* or *Eccllesiastical* sounds worse with him then chains or shakels, as destructive to the *liberty* of Saints, and the *freedom* of a Christian fellowship. In brief, he is such a piece of confusion that he knows not himself what

what he is, and we are extremely perplexed to think what he may be when he comes in the way of our Meditations.

LXXXIX.

A true *jeere* is a *jest* in earnest: which is worse then down-right railing. A smiling cut-throat is the most injurious villain. To turn *truth* into a matter of *mirth* is to banish all favourable compassion, which is the bond of society and friendship. An *abusive wit* is but a *sweet poyson*, which though for the present it affects the *taste*, yet afterwards it *infects* the *heart*. A generous spirit scorns to solace himself with the disgrace of another.

ther. I will not triumph in the wounds of an enemy, nor insult upon the weaknesse of a friend. For the common frailty of our nature is such, that we may condemn our selves when we laugh at others.

XC.

He is neither wise nor good that will take any advantage of another by way of insultation. Revenge may make a Giant of a dwarfe; and no man can be so miserable but one time or other he may have happinesse enough to requite an injury. Every little Bee hath his sting; and the least of creatures hath malice enough to right it self. Despair will put life into
a

a very coward ; and he that will suffer *much* will not suffer *always*. A fury that proceeds from disdain will ruine him that caused it. We may *neglect* an enemy with *safety* and *honour* ; but to *contemne* him is both *dangerous* and *damnable*.

XCI.

Nothing puts a man so much out of tune as *discontent*. A little mudd will defile a whole cistern of fair water. A fretting spleen like a mist that puts out heavens eye obscures the soul with cloudy fumes, and makes the minde so intent upon her misery that she never seeks for a redresse. *Society* cannot cure this disease ; for it disturbs all con-
I ver-

versation. A *froward* man offends all, and all offend him. But those discontents are most irksome which may not be revealed: for then the heart withers and consumes without hope of comfort. *Good Counsel* is restorative; the want of which drives men into a desperate ruine. *Sorrow smothered up* murders the patient, and like an undermining Pioneer digs for destruction.

XCII.

Too much freeness will make any man *poore* and *miserable*. An *excessive* bounty concludes in a loathsome defect. *Mischief* ever follows him that hath *overmuch* goodnesse. *Necessity* makes them vile

whom *fortune* made liberal,
and liberality made wretched.
Prodigality must have fuel to
maintain it: hence those that
give most, *covet* most. A
treasure strangely wasted must
be supplied by extraordinary
means; yet what pity is it
that a *Noble-nature* should be
forced to commit unworthy
Acts? How have the best dis-
positions been thus violated by
an extravagant sweetnesse?
Many men had held out bet-
ter if they had not gone so fast
at first. A *sober* pace never
tires. Put a horse to his full
speed in the beginning and he
will faile before the journeys
end: but a gentle rider pre-
vents both the danger of stum-
bling, and the trouble of ty-
ring.

XCIII.

Conceit will make any thing *unpleasant*; we are built much upon opinion, which yet is but a sandy foundation. One man is all for *mirth* and *musick*, *company* and *revels*; another findes more pleasure in a *retired privacy*. *Spending* is a recreation to some, *gain* to others. In all this variety of humours, the imagination breeds content and delight. Our own thoughts are the mould in which we cast the model of our happiness. Our affections are minted by the inclination of the heart, and every passion beares the stamp of a conceited belief. But how miserable is our greatest glory that hath no other

ther consideration to make it valuable but our own persuasion? He that relies upon such a credit for his welfare may quickly drive himself into a fool's Paradise. But fancy of prosperity is adversity indeed; and to have no assurance of heaven but by a dream is to fall head-long into hell.

XCIV.

Nothing is so full of change and alteration as *man*. *Proteus* never knew so many various shapes. Our Passions turn us round in a perpetual circle of vicissitude. *Love* sometimes whirls about to an extremity of *hatred*. Many have killed those for whom they have
I 3 been

been willing to *die*. What a slender thread holds together the *patron* and his *favourite*; and how small a matter can undo or break this union? How hardly are some men pleased in their *Dyet*, being constant in nothing but *variety*, and yet not satisfied! Our *Recreations* do discover a giddiness, and our most solemn actions speak something of mutability. Our *apparel* is the very emblem of inconstancy. A *plain* suit to day; *rich* robes to morrow. This is the imperfection of humanity. The weakness of our nature betrays it self in an unsteadfast motion. Other things alter not but according to their object. *Constancy* is a noble *virtue*;

ture; yet where *vice* is predominant it is no more then wilful *folly*. The way to perfection is to change for the better. Therefore a firme resolution without discretion is most dangerous. His condition is desperate that will not be perswaded to leave his sins.

XCV.

There is no *temptation* or *adversity* which hath not a peculiar and proper medicine from some part of our *Saviours cross*. When the winde of *Ambition* swells the sailes of my affection, I will think how the head of the Church was dejected in this exaltation: what reproach and scorne he endured from those that were not worthy

worthy to behold him: He that was Supream *judge* of all, would be content to undergo the death of a *malefactor*. When the sting of *Envy* plucks my heart, I will remember how sweetly and ingeniously he gave up himself in our behalf; what a favourable friend he was to his worst enemies. When I am solicited by *Intemperance*, how he was pleased with *gall* and *vinegar*, besides a full cup of his *Fathers* wrath. When tempted with some dishonest *pleasure*, how his whole life was void of all *delight*, what were the pains of his tormenting *Agony* and cruel *passion*. If I am moved with *anger*, how like the quiet *Lamb* he never opened his mouth but for a *prayer* or *blef-*
sing.

sing. Who can be angry with his neighbour, when he hears him pray for his enemies? *Father forgive them for they know not what they do.* If poverty afflict my soul, or a covetous desire incline my heart to an unlawful gaine, then I will consider how the Lord himself, the Lord of the whole universe was content to be borne in a Stable, and die in the Field: a manger for his cradle, and for his death-bed the cross. In this manner I can please myself, and finde extraordinary comfort in the greatest Affliction of body or minde. I can boast of my infirmities, rejoyce in my adversity; be proud of my unhappinesse, and blesse God that I am counted worthy to follow the footsteps of my
I 5 deare

Luk. 23:34

dear Redeemer: and *thankfully* imbrace all the miseries both of *life* and *death*.

XCVI.

The entertainment of *any sin* whatsoever may work our final overthrow. That enemy is most dangerous which is least regarded: and many men are thus soothed to destruction. They flatter themselves in some *little* transgression, yet beare a profest hatred to *every* grand impiety. Every man will professe an absolute enmity with those apparant vices, as these, *Rapine*, *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Incest*, and the like: but *simple fornication* is but a moderate use of pleasure, an harmlesse trick of youth,

youth, an easie escape, a sweet Trespas. Who can claim a propriety in goodness or vertue, that doth thus delight himself with a spotless innocence? The *Gnat* a small creature flying into the eye of a *Caldean Lion*, which are of a clear wit, tender composition, so torments that fierce and mighty *Prince of Beasts* with his little sting, that he is forced by the extreamity of paine with his own claws to deprive himself of sight and life: Thus the least offence is sometimes great enough to drive the purest conscience of the strongest Christian into a wound and mortal despaire.

XCVII.

That man is a *Prince* indeed
that

that knows how to command his tongue. *Silence* will prevent a mischief, which too much talk will induce and aggravate. A discourtesie may be smothered up and hush'd by a temperate forbearance of words; but we seldom see blowes given without a volley of ill language. Superfluity of speech like water sprinkled upon coales doth raise the fire of contention, which otherwise would go out of it self. Thus thinking to *extinguish* we *inflame* discord, and our breath becomes the bellows to a fiery fewd. Thus when we endeavour to *coole*, we *increase* the heate: and the mouth while it labours to blow out the sparks, stirres up the fuel of in-

indignation till it flame about our cares. It is well said, *that we hold our peace when we say nothing*; for all war proceeds from the jarring discord of an ill-tun'd voice. A *long oration* many times concludes in *sorrow*; and though it may be for our disadvantage to be *silent*, yet properly we cannot *repent* of what was never *uttered*. He that speaks *much* seldome speaks *truth*; which being plain or naked needs not the trim or habit of a large discourse: and he that lies often will at last discover himself by a contradiction. Whoever therefore would be *wise* or *honest* let him say *little*: for he that talks without *compass* can never mean fairly, nor handsomly deceive. An

everlasting Speaker is a troublesome fool that will still be saying something, because he *understands* nothing; and if sometimes he hit upon the right, he is more beholding to his *mistresse Fortune*, then his own good skill or knowledge.

XCVIII.

An industrious diligence never makes too much haste. Things of *wonder* are not accomplished without long and serious consideration. We cannot catch at *vertue* with a leap; her *Throne* is fixt upon a rock, whither 'tis impossible to ascend but by *degrees*. Blessings may fall into our mouths, but like the raine or dew by drops; and he that greedily gapes for

for a flood may be choaked with an inundation of curses. The way to heaven is up-hill; and he that would get thither by running, may tyre before he can come to the top of the mountain. God himself spent *six days* in creating the world; and do we think to obtaine everlasting happinesse in a *moment*? How many men have been undone in an *eager* pursuit of wealth and honour, while others by a *sober* thirst have sped better. It becomes every man to have some employment; but he that is too quick and over-hasty in a businesse seems to be weary of it before it be well begun, and will never stay to see it happily ended. He that makes light of the *burden* will hardly arrive
at

at the profit of an action.

XCIX.

As true it is as *Truth* it self, that the true servants of God shall never want. The *Heavens* shall rain down *Manna*, the hard *rock* shall melt into water, varieties shall come flying upon the wings of the winde. We read of a dry cruse, that became a fountain of oyle, the *Lions* jaws that afforded honey, the devouring *Ravens* that could spare meat, the fish with money in his mouth. All creatures contribute to the relief of those that abound in grace. In the barren wilderness *David* was satisfied with marrow and fatnesse. Our *Infant Saviour* is safe in
Egypt

Egypt, a Nation ever hated of
of the *Jewes*. *St. Chrysostome*
found friends in *Armenia*,
where he could expect no-
thing but *famine* and *death*.
Great *Athanasius* lived six
years in a *Cystern*, and foure
moneths in his fathers *Tomb*.
The *Divine Providence* can
preserve those that are appoin-
ted to *die*. His hand is ne-
ver too short to confer prote-
ction and salvation. Thus in-
deed the *Protestants* have a
God for all purposes; one that
never failes to provide for
those that trust in him. Con-
ceive the worst, and we can
be but beaten out of Gods
ground into heaven; where
our immortal souls shall be
free from all farther trouble,
persecution, and *distresse*.

C.

It is reported of *Pliny* the Elder, that while he was overcurious in searching out the cause of the continual burning of mount *Aetna*, the smoke that ensued from thence at last choaked him. Thus some men are overwhelmed with their own *curiosity*. To seek for a signe of Gods visible proceedings in his unrevealed decrees, is both *vaine* and *dangerous*. Why should I endeavour to know that which is impossible to be known? To comprehend that which is above the reach of *humanity*? If I acknowledge a *Deity* I cannot deny him those secrets of *State* which constitute his *essenti-*

essential power. Even earthly Kings have their secret resolves; and shall the King of heaven lie open to any mortal eye? God is a consuming fire. He that comes too near to inform himself of his Nature and essence may be suffocated with the smoaky blasts of his fiery indignation. I will admire him in all his works but inquire the meaning of none, no farther then he is graciously pleased to render an account of his Actions in his holy word. His Publick declarations are full of satisfaction, and he that seekes for other Reasons then are there set down is most unreasonable. All conceptions of the minde are either Relative, Negative, or Absolute, By the first we understand God no otherwise then

Heb. 12.
29.

then he stands in relation to our selves, as a *Father*, a *Governour*, a *Creator*, or the like, which cannot positively express his *Nature*. By the *Second* as when we say, he is not *Mortall*, not *Materiall*, not *Finite*, we understand not what he is, but what he is *not*. By the *Third*, we cannot apprehend him at all. If such a conception should be granted, it must be such as whereby we shal be able to comprehend all those real Attributes which formerly and properly belong to his divinity; which no naturall understanding can imbrace any otherwise then by reflection in the Creatures. Lord, if it be so hard to understand what thou art by the Strength of *Reason*, how vaine is their
- wis-

wisdome that would prove
there is no God at all, and be-
cause they cannot know thy
essential truth will disclaim all
belief in thy *power* and *exi-*
stence.

FINIS.

Hic Liber est meus.

July 25th.
